

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS:

The following claim set replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) Process for the preparation of a copolymer of maleic anhydride and an alkyl vinyl ether, comprising the steps of supplying maleic anhydride and the alkyl vinyl ether and an initiator, together forming a feed flow, through an inlet to a reactor wherein maleic anhydride and the alkyl vinyl ether react to a copolymer of maleic anhydride and alkyl vinyl ether which forms a reaction mixture with the maleic anhydride, the alkyl vinyl ether and the initiator, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the process is a continuous process and the reactor is a loop reactor, optionally followed by a postreactor, and wherein the process includes internally circulating the reaction mixture ~~is internally circulated, whereby this in such a manner that the~~ reaction mixture arrives again at the inlet before the maleic anhydride and alkyl vinyl ether have completely reacted and while a remainder of initiator is still present.
2. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein the feed flow to the loop reactor further comprises a diluent, a diluent mixture a solvent or a solvent mixture.
3. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1, wherein the feed flow comprises a molar ratio of maleic anhydride to initiator of between 100 and ~~40 000~~ 10,000.
4. (Currently amended) Process according to claim 1, wherein the feed flow comprises a molar ratio of alkyl vinyl ether to maleic anhydride of between 1.05 ~~and 5~~ and 5.
5. (Previously Presented) Process according to claim 1, wherein the alkyl vinyl ether is a C1-C4 alkyl vinyl ether.

VAN BENTHEM ET AL

Serial No. 10/502,313

June 7, 2007

6. (Currently amended) Process according to claim 1, wherein the process is carried out at a temperature between 50⁰C and ~~180⁰C~~ 180⁰C.
7. (Previously Presented) Process according to claim 1, wherein the ratio of an internal circulation to the feed flow is at least 15.
8. (Currently Amended) Process according to claim 1, comprising subsequently heating ~~wherein~~ a part of the reaction mixture ~~is subsequently heated~~ to a temperature between 120 and 220⁰C, for a time sufficient to reduce the free MA content to below 10 parts per million, based on the total weight of the reaction mixture.
9. (Cancelled)
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Cancelled)
12. (Cancelled)